

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 231100Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2518

INFO USUN 510

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 5086

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SS, SP, MO, MR, AG, US

SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA--U.S. POLICY

REF: STATE 17088

I AM CONCERNED AT WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A FUNDAMENTAL MISREADING OF SPANISH POSITION IN PARA 2 OF REFTTEL. THE SPANISH POSITION, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, IS AS FOLLOWS. SPAIN HAS MADE POLICY DECISION TO GET OUT OF THE SAHARA ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, IN ORDER TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT IN COLONIAL CONFLICT OVER TERRITORY OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE TO IT. IT WISHES TO GET OUT IN AN ORDERLY FASHION AND IN A WAY THAT MAINTAINS REASONABLY GOOD SPANISH RELATIONS WITH BOTH MOROCCO AND ALGERIA. ECONOMIC AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS IN SAHARA ARE SECONDARY, ALTHOUGH SPAIN LOGICALLY WOULD LIKE ALSO TO HAVE DIVIDENDS IN THESE REGARDS IF POSSIBLE. SPAIN HAS TAKEN THE U.N. AND SELF-DETERMINATION ROUTE THUS FAR BECAUSE THAT HAS SEEMED MOST CONVENIENT IN THE LIGHT OF WORLD OPINION AND OF THE CONFLICTING INTERESTS OF CONCERNED PARTIES. AT THE SAME TIME, SPAIN WOULD NOT OPPOSE MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA'S DIVIDING UP SAHARA IF ALGERIA WERE TO AGREE, AND IF THIS
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WERE THE ONLY WAY TO ACHIEVE ITS FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSES. IT PROBABLY WOULD EVEN ENTER INTO A DEAL UNDER WHICH IT

WOULD ENDORSE THIS SOLUTION IF IT WERE CONVINCED THAT A MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN /ALGERIAN AGREEMENT COULD AND WOULD OCCUR. BUT IT CONTINUES SKEPTICAL OVER ALGERIA'S CONCURRENCE, AND IT HAS BEEN UNWILLING TO TRY TO WORK OUT A BILATERAL DEAL WITH MOROCCO THAT MIGHT LATER INVOLVE IT IN CONFLICT WITH ALGERIA. THEREFORE, SPAIN CONTINUES ON THE U.N. ROUTE; AND WE ARE BACK TO THE FIRST QUESTION, WHICH IS WHETHER OR NOT THERE REALLY IS A FIRM ALGERIA/MOROCCO AGREEMENT. IF THERE IS, AND SPAIN IS CONVINCED THERE IS, THE BALL GAME WILL QUICKLY CHANGE. ALL OF THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SPANISH PRIDE, WHICH HAS I THINK BEEN KEPT UNDER CONTROL AS A FACTOR IN THIS CASE.

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